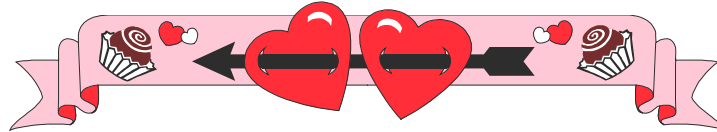


February 2000

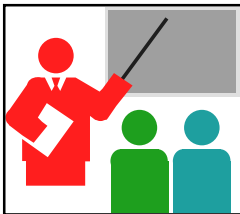
Number 9

# RCFTS NEWS



This is the ninth issue of the RCFTS News. We hope it is helpful, informative and of interest to you. Please make sure that everyone who works with RCFTS in your State gets a copy of this newsletter. If there are any comments or suggestions, feel free to express them to any of the Review Board Members.

The newsletter and RCFTS Coordinators List can be obtained from the internet at the following address: <http://www.usda.gov/rus/water/rcfts.htm>. Contact anyone on the SRB if you experience difficulties in pulling down the newsletter from the internet site and we will be glad to either mail or fax a copy to your state.



## **Proposed Training for FY00:**

This year we are considering a very different training schedule. We are planning to provide at least three (3) one-day WEB FOCUS training courses, which will take the place of the Basic RCFTS training and the RCFTS Coordinator's Seminar this year. The proposed training dates are April 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup>. Due to a heavy training schedule in RHS there are limited computer rooms available in St. Louis this year.

At this point we are planning to go back to the typical RCFTS training schedule next year.



## Multi-Program Related Issues



### **Purpose of Funds Codes:**



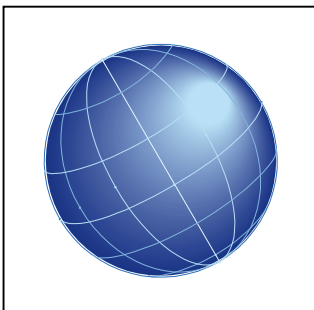
Due to astute observation, it was brought to our attention that there has been conflicting information regarding Purpose of Funds codes (in past newsletters and various unnumbered letters). Therefore, for clarification, listed below are the correct definitions for your immediate use. If you are aware of any codes already in the system which would be affected by the following list, please make the appropriate corrections. The Help Screen in RCFTS has also been updated to match the following definitions. Sorry for the confusion!!!! (P.S. Our New Year's resolution is to "be more organized.")

0 - Cost Overrun (after construction has begun)  
 1 - New  
 2 - Expansion  
 3 - Renovation  
 4 - Replacement  
 5 - Transfer of Ownership

6 - Restructure/Refinance Debt  
 7 - Transfer and Assumption  
 8 - Vehicles and Equipment  
 9 - Other  
 A - Revolving Loan Fund  
 B - Small Business Incubator  
 C - Technical Assistance

New codes will soon be introduced for infrastructure and cost overruns incurred prior to the start of construction. Once these are implemented we will let you know.

### **WEB FOCUS:**



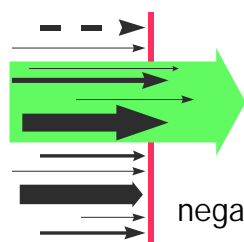
The new WEB FOCUS site is [stlssb.usda.gov](http://stlssb.usda.gov), which replaces the URL's previously given out. WEB FOCUS is available to everyone who has a FOCUS ID. In order to gain access email Robin Pulkkinen - she will need your FOCUS ID to update the user file.

St. Louis has begun converting some RCFTS canned

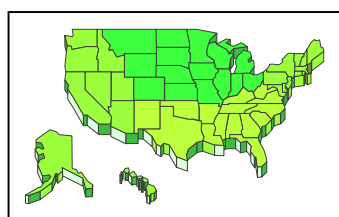
FOCUS reports over to WEB FOCUS but they have not been tested. They would appreciate any input on the accuracy of these reports because it appears some of them have changed a bit - this is not the intent. Please comment on any inconsistencies or discrepancies by sending your comments to Ann Finklang at [ann.finklang@stl.rural.usda.gov](mailto:ann.finklang@stl.rural.usda.gov). It would be helpful if a copy of your email comments were forwarded to Robin at [rpulkkin@rurdev.usda.gov](mailto:rpulkkin@rurdev.usda.gov).

### **Special Initiatives Codes:**

Last August the new Special Initiative Code field was added to RCFTS Screens CP08 and BI 57. This new field soon became extremely important in tracking national funding disbursements for special initiatives (i.e., Target Areas, Water 2000, Pacific Northwest, etc.). At the time this field became usable, states were requested to update ALL FY 99 obligation records and any pending applications and preapplications.



It appears that many states still have not updated their records to indicate funding under special initiatives. Specifically, the National Office recently ran a report searching for Pacific Northwest projects obligated during FY99 ----- the report was negative. All RCFTS Coordinators are requested to canvass their states and ensure that the special initiatives fields have been updated as appropriate for all RCFTS records, including FY99 obligations and any pending applications and/or preapplications. We understand that there may be problems with the codes "disappearing" in RCFTS once entered. If there are any problems with saving these codes while you are working on updating this field please send an email message to Robin Pulkkinen or Andrea Barnett indicating what problems you are having. We would like to see this field updated **NO LATER THAN MARCH 17, 2000**. Please send an email message to Robin that these records have been updated for all programs (CF, WW and BP).



This reporting information is invaluable and your ongoing use of this field is appreciated. For your information, an additional code will soon be available for the Earth Day initiative. In the meantime, a listing of the codes as they are now established on the system is provided below:

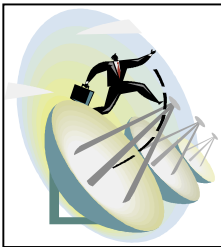
A - Target Area (based on strategic plan)

B - Water 2000  
C - Pacific Northwest

D -	REAP Zones	H -	Medically Underserved
E -	Military Base Closings		Area
F -	NAD/NAFTA	I -	High Unemployment Area
G -	Fund for Rural America		

Additionally, there have been several requests from states to add new codes for state-specific initiatives. Unfortunately, due to the wide variety of state initiatives across the nation, we are unable to accommodate these requests. For clarification purposes, it is intended that any state-specific initiatives be tracked with the "A" code for Target Areas listed in the State Strategic Plan.

Please let us know if you have any questions on the use of this field.



## RFA UPDATES

● **State and District FOCUS reports** have been revised to show subtotals and totals by Program Area (i.e., WW, WWA, CF, CFA, or BP). This was implemented last November. If there are any problems with these reports please let us know.

● **B&I RCFTS Screen Modifications:**

Screen BI 54, Applicant/Borrower (Part 2), has been modified to provide another field value of "0" under "Race Code" and "Sex Code" to allow for tracking "Public Body/Nonprofit."

Screen BI 56, "Lender Information," now has a new code to identify non-traditional lenders. The new code is "12."

● **Racial Breakdown Fields:**

The racial breakdown field descriptions were recently revised to match the racial categories shown on the new Compliance Review



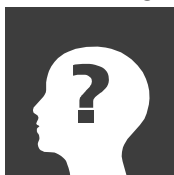
forms. In order to accommodate the new field descriptions the field entry was reduced to five digits. Unknown to us, there were approximately 168 instances across the nation where some of the fields had 6-digit entries. We have re-worked the screen and the fields will once again accept six digits. We apologize for any inconvenience.

### **CF Grant Download:**

All CF grant information is now being downloaded from the accounting system. Please let us know if there are any other remaining download issues regarding CF grants that may still be a problem. All FOCUS reports should now have accurate information regarding CF grants.

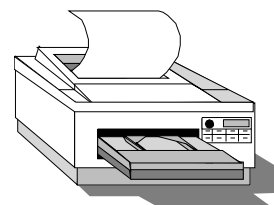
### **Help Screens:**

Several Help Screens in RCFTS were recently updated and/or revised because of missing or incorrect data. We are asking field offices to help us out --- if the "F1" help key produces a message which is incorrect and needs updating, please let us know. It would be greatly appreciated. (Incidentally, correct help screens may save considerable time by not having to refer to the RCFTS Users Manual.) The National Office can make these corrections instantly to the help screen messages once they are aware of the problem. By letting us know of any inconsistencies, we can all continue to keep the system "friendly" and usable for everyone.



### **Printing FOCUS Reports:**

The printing problems experienced by some offices cannot be resolved through an RFA. These problems, the most common being un-recognized page breaks, have occurred since the switch to the lan/wan system.



Instead, if you are having problems printing your FOCUS reports contact your State I RM or the Help Desk. Just to let you know, however --- some offices *have* had success when using the lpservice ID to print reports.

## ● **Graduation Screens:**

The date fields on the CP16 and BI 61 graduation screens were incorrectly reading Year 2000 dates. This has now been corrected and there should no longer be any error messages.

## ● **Screen CP09 – Number of Benefitted Users:**

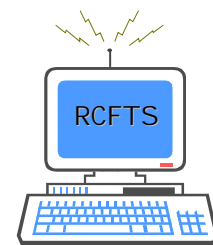
Screen CP09 has been revised to accept “zeroes” as valid entries for the number of residential and non-residential benefitted users. Cost overruns which do not pick up additional users can now be tracked successfully without the field automatically reverting to blanks. Now, unless the field office chooses to update the fund request record, RCFTS displays “zeroes” in these fields.



This system change will affect Report CP05, “Obligation – Missing Data Element Check.” Formerly, whenever the number of residential/non-residential users was zero and the system reverted to blanks, the information was also blank on the Missing Data Element report, causing some question as to whether the field office had failed to update the fund request record or whether, in fact, there were no additional users. Now, the “zeroes” should substantiate a valid entry and indicate there were no additional users benefitted by this fund request.

## ● **PLAS/RCFTS Interface:**

The interface between PLAS and RCFTS appears to be corrected. Any RCFTS fields dependent upon a download from PLAS should now be accurate. This also means that FOCUS Reports CP03, CP04 and CP07 should now be reliable.





## **New Procedure for Tracking ARC Grants:**

(Insert in RCFTS Users Guide for future reference.)

It has been historically difficult to determine the amount of ARC assistance administered by Rural Development. This became doubly significant in FY 99 when many states processed notably more ARC grants than in previous years. A few states were left wondering what "hit" them. Consequently, it now appears necessary to devise another way to track these ARC grants so states can maintain accurate records and paint a truer picture of their caseloads. Besides a more accurate caseload count, this new process will also guarantee that all loan/grant numbers in PLAS have a matching loan/grant number in RCFTS. Previously there was no way to assign the grant number or an obligation date to the ARC grant if it was part of a project with RD funding.

Therefore, effective immediately, **all ARC grants should be tracked as separate facilities.**

ARC grant facility records are established by using fund code "00" and the appropriate NAICS code to determine which agency is responsible for administering the grant (RHS = 000004, RUS = 000005, RBS = 000007). ARC grant facility records will be established for the following:

- ARC grant with RD funds.
- ARC grant without RD funds.

There is a slight difference in the way these ARC grants will be tracked.

- **ARC grants with Rural Development loan/grant funds.**



When ARC grant funds are committed to a project involving Rural Development funds, the ARC grant needs to appear as joint funding with the RD loan/grant on Screen CP11, the same as it has in the past. The difference is that now it should also be tracked separate from the RD funding.

This separate ARC grant record is basically for reporting purposes. Remember, you are not tracking the *project*—that's already been done on the RD loan/grant

record. Instead, you are just capturing the ARC grant information outside of the RD project so you can report it as part of your state's accomplishments.

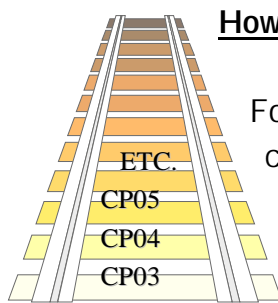
States may wish to enter a remark on Screen CP09 in the 40-character "REMARKS" field, cross-referencing this ARC grant with the appropriate RD loan/grant records. For instance, you might enter "See 91-01 and 02" to reference this ARC grant to the "91" facility record for loan "01" and grant "02."

Establish the ARC grant facility/fund request record as described below.

- **ARC grants without Rural Development loan/grant funds.**

In this case, states are tracking the total ARC grant *project*, with all of its attendant funding sources. The *project* does not involve RD funds; therefore, there will be no associated RD loan/grant record. All information pertaining to this project will have to be tracked on the ARC grant record.

Establish the ARC grant facility/fund request record as described below.



#### **How to track ARC grants:**

Following is an outline of screens/fields which should be completed when establishing any ARC grant record. Since Rural Development is responsible only for administering these grants, there will be some fields/screens that are not applicable.

- **Screen CP03 – Applicant/Borrower (Part 1)**  
Complete in its entirety.
- **Screen CP04 – Applicant/Borrower (Part 2)** - N/A. We don't track audits, etc. for ARC grants.
- **Screen CP05 – Facility (Part 1)**  
Complete the same information as you would for RHS/RUS/RBS borrowers with the exception of the Activity Dates. (Compliance reviews may be done at an ARC grant closing, but we probably wouldn't schedule any follow-up reviews, nor would we do security inspections.) Racial breakdowns may be entered when the information is available.



- Screen CP06 – Facility (Part 2) – you might collect this information at grant closing or start of construction, but there would be no annual updates from financial reports.
- Screen CP07 – Facility (Part 3) – you might capture the construction warranty inspections and RD's 9-11<sup>th</sup> month report.
- Screen CP7B – Facility (Part 4) – continuation of the prior screen, as necessary.
- Screen CP08 – Funding & User Information (Part 1)  
Complete the same information as you would for RHS/RUS/RBS borrowers, with the exception of loan-related fields and the Priority Wt field.
- Screen CP09 – Funding & User Information (Part 2)  
Complete applicable fields where the information is available.
- Screen CP9A – Relending Programs Information – N/A
- Screen CP10 – Funding & Cost Information (Part 1) – N/A. Note, however, the information in the fields at the bottom of this screen will still be downloaded nightly from PLAS.
- Screen CP11 – Funding & Cost Information (Part 2) – this screen will be completed either one of two ways, as described below:

- *ARC grant with RD funding:*

Complete the cost analysis portion only. The total should equal the amount of the ARC grant (i.e., if the ARC grant was \$300,000, the total of the cost analysis section would equal \$300,000). There will be no joint funding.

- *ARC grant without RD funding:*



Complete the cost analysis portion for the amount of the ARC grant plus any joint funding. (For example, if the ARC grant was \$300,000 and the applicant contribution was \$50,000, the total of the cost analysis section

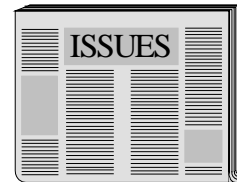
would equal \$350,000). Enter any joint funding (for example, in this case the applicant contribution would be \$50,000) for this project under the joint funding portion - DO NOT ENTER THE ARC GRANT!

- Screen CP12 – Status & Tracking Information  
Track the progress of the ARC grant in the same manner as RHS/RUS/RBS borrowers.
- Screen CP13 & CP14 – Subsidiary Tracking Information  
Complete the same information as you would for RHS/RUS/RBS borrowers.

Time permitting, states might want to go back and establish ARC grant records for past ARC grants. In any case, in the future all ARC grants should be tracked as separate facilities.



## RURAL UTILITIES SERVICE



### Water and Waste System Description:

The Water and Waste System Description list was distributed with the last newsletter. However, some codes are not yet available on RCFTS, as follows:

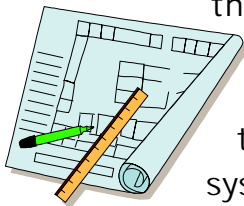
#### Type of Source/Disposal (Discharge):

- U (Subsurface)
- V (Treatment Contract)

#### Type of Treatment:

- HH (Recirculating Sand Filter)
- II (Ultraviolet Disinfection)
- JJ (Sequencing Batch Reactors).

Even though these few codes are at present unavailable, it is still necessary for the engineer to update the Water and Waste System Description sheet to describe the system which is being developed. Until the codes become valid, if the project engineer uses any of these codes you must retain the sheet for later input once the system is updated to accept them. Any questions, give Robin a call.



## ● **Expanded Definition of the 131 and 231 Status Codes:**



Some states have been working jointly with other Federal agencies in an application review process which involves a committee to review applications and make recommendations to the borrower for suggested sources of funding. Rural Development may be on the list of recommended funding sources, but we may not be the first choice. The applicant then decides which funding sources they will pursue. As far as the status of the project, officially Rural Development has received an application, but cannot proceed until the borrower makes a decision.

The states requested a status code to reflect this stage of an application. The definition of the 131 and 231 status codes has therefore been expanded to include the following phrase at the end of the definition – “or borrower eligible but it appears other public funding is available.”

## ● **New Type of Assistance Codes:**

Several new programs were added with the FY00 Appropriations Bill for which the following Type of Assistance Codes (TOA's) have been assigned:

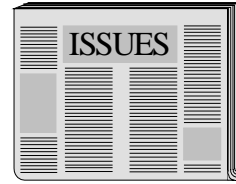
- 285 – Water & Waste 306C Grant – Native American – Domestic Water Only
- 286 – Water & Waste 306C Grant – Native American – Domestic Waste
- 287 – Water & Waste 306C Grant – Native American – Domestic Combination Water & Waste

These codes have been added to RCFTS and you should begin tracking application/obligations, etc. immediately. These codes have NOT yet been added to ADPS so obligations must still be done manually. Please check with the National Office for the procedure on this manual obligation process.

PLEASE NOTE THE CODES FOR NATIVE AMERICANS ARE ONLY TO BE USED FOR THE SET ASIDE PROGRAM DISTRIBUTED ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS FROM THE NATIONAL OFFICE ACCOUNT.

*If you have any questions, contact Robin Pulkkinen in the National Office.*

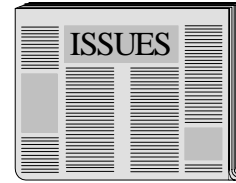
## RURAL HOUSING SERVICE



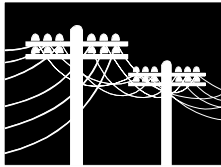
Please refer to the multi-program related issues.

*If you have any questions, contact Andrea Barnett in the National Office.*

## RURAL BUSINESS SERVICE



### **Rural Economic Development Loan and Grant Program:**



The following NAICS codes are to be used instead of the SIC codes. These codes will have to be changed manually as we are unable to provide a table conversion.

<u>TYPE OF BORROWER</u>	<u>NAICS</u>	<u>SIC</u>
TELEPHONE	4813	51331
ELECTRIC	4911	221122

### **Rural Business Opportunity Grants Manual Obligation Process:**

The following is being provided to give guidance regarding procedures to follow when obligating RBOG set aside funds for the EZ/EC and REAP initiatives.

Form 1940-1 should identify one of the following Type of Assistance (TOA) codes:

- 288 – Rural Business Opportunity Grants EZ/EC/REAP
- 290 – Rural Business Opportunity Grants REAP Set Aside



These codes have been added to RCFTS and you should begin tracking application/obligations, etc. immediately. These codes


have NOT yet been added to ADPS so obligations must still be completed manually by the Finance Office. A copy of Form RD 1940-1, Request for Obligation, must be submitted to the Fiscal Control Branch (Fund Control Team), Mail Code FC-360, or submit by facsimile to 314/539-2756.

To cancel an obligation, the field office must mail or submit by facsimile, Form RD 1940-10, Cancellation of US Treasury Check and/or Obligation, to the Finance Office. Obligation cancellations should be submitted to Mail Code FC-360, facsimile 314/539-2756.

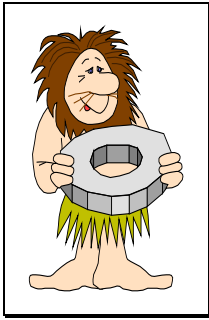
When the above codes are used, the Special Initiative field in RCFTS is to be coded "D" for REAP zones on Screens CP08 and BI 57.

### **Intermediary Relending Programs:**

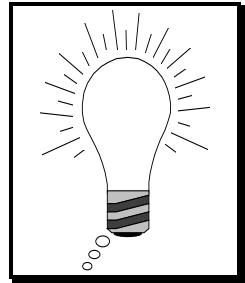
The Finance Office will now mail payment coupons for each IRP borrower's account to their respective State Offices, who must then decide whether to mail them to the borrower or retain them in their office. The amount owed for each payment will **NOT** be indicated on the coupon; therefore, the amount must be provided to the borrower before payments are sent. Payments, with their coupons, should be sent to the address indicated on the coupon. Form 451-2, Schedule of Remittance, will be used only if the borrower does not have a coupon. Please refer to the helpful hints which Joanne Fricke provided at the last RCFTS training.

 **Environmental Code "9,"** was established for adoption of another agency's environmental. This code does not and was never intended to work on the BI side.

*If you have any questions, contact Sylvia Neal in the National Office.*



If you have any questions, problems or suggestions, please notify a RCFTS System Review Board (SRB) member listed below. Your input could be invaluable.



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ANN RANKIN, KY - S/O	606/224-7336 arankin@rdasun2.rurdev.usda.gov
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